

## Post 9/11 Veterans Education Act Grants Expanded GI Bill Benefits

By Berni Davis, Editor

On June 30<sup>th</sup>, President Bush signed the Post 9/11 Veterans Education Act into law thereby expanded education benefits for those who served on Active Duty after September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2001. The new benefits are payable for eligible training on or after August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009. No payments will be made for classes taken prior to that date.

The Post 9/11 GI Bill is significantly different from the previous GI Bill, which sent a monthly check to the servicemember. This new benefit includes payment of tuition and fees directly to the school, a monthly housing allowance, a yearly stipend for books and a possible relocation cost. Each eligible Veteran or service member will receive a percentage of the pervious items based on the length of time on active duty. See the chart for a detailed description of benefits on page 9.

Eligibility is based on a minimum of 30 days active duty, after September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2001 **and** discharged for a service connected disability or served an aggregate of 90 days and be honorably discharged. Those receiving another form of the GI

**Continued on page 9**

## State of Utah Converts to a 4 Day Workweek-New Office Hours

On June 26, Governor Huntsman announced the Working 4 Utah initiative. As part of the initiative The Utah Department of Veterans Affairs and the Veterans Cemetery and Memorial Park will be converting to a four-day work week beginning August 4. The main office, located at 550 Foothill BLVD Suite 202, and the Cemetery and Memorial Park at 17111 Camp Williams Rd will be open for business from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Thursday. However, the VA Regional Office Building that houses the Utah Department of Veterans Affairs is only open from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, so please call if you need assistance outside the building hours.

If you have any questions regarding new business hours, please contact at 1-800-894-9497.

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Sept 11th: Free entrance to the Utah State Fair for military and Veterans with ID.
- Nov 7th: Homeless Veterans Stand Down
- Nov 7th: Veteran Benefit and Job Fair, South Towne Expo Center, 2:00-6:00pm

## Mutual Respect | From VA Medical Center Public Relations

A Purple Heart recipient from Operation Iraqi Freedom and a Medal of Honor recipient who served on Iwo Jima met to share common ground. Gordon Ewell went on 59 combat missions while serving in Iraq earning a Purple Heart. Ewell now faces one of the most challenging missions of his life as he recovers from traumatic brain injury.

George E. Wahlen received the Medal of Honor for his service during World War II. Wounded three times, Wahlen's citation states "Wahlen served as a constant inspiration and contributed vitally to the high morale of his company during critical phases of this strategically important engagement." The Salt Lake City VA medical center proudly bears the name of George E. Wahlen, Utah's only living Medal of Honor recipient.

Both Ewell and Wahlen, though generations apart, have been recognized by the community and service organizations for their heroic service. The two men met at several events and became good acquaintances. "Everywhere I went I was looking for my friend George," said Ewell. "I saw him so



*Gordon Ewell, left, presenting George E. Wahlen with the custom walking stick*

much I considered him my friend and talked about him all the time."

Ewell, who walks with the assistance of a walking stick, presented to him by a California motorcycle riders group, felt he wanted to thank Wahlen for his service. Because of Ewell's high regard for Wahlen, he worked with a carver from the Eastern Oklahoma Wood Carvers Association to create a very personal hand-carved walking stick for Wahlen.

The two shared a special moment of visible mutual respect when Ewell recently presented Wahlen with the walking stick. "I know you had far many memories that were not good; I hope that this brings back some good ones too," said Ewell, and Wahlen said to Ewell, "thank you for all you've done."

## Vet Center Services are Available Across the State of Utah

By Ray Ross

The Vet Centers continue to expand their Outreach efforts in Utah. Vet Centers have provided professional and confidential assessment and counseling to veterans for many years. They're trained and specialized in working with veterans who served on active duty in a war zone and military sexual trauma counseling. Bereavement Counseling is also available.

In the St. George/Cedar City area there is readjustment counseling available through Dr. Richard Moody, Turning Leaf Wellness Center, St. George, Utah. This contract service has been available for several years and focuses on both

"combat zone" and "military sexual trauma" issues. Any eligible veteran should contact Ray Ross, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Team Leader, Utah Vet Centers, at (801)584-1294 or toll free at (800)613-4012, extension 1294. Authorization for this free service can usually be done over the telephone. A copy of the soldier's military discharge (Form DD214) is usually required.

Vet Center services are also available in the Tooele, Ogden, Brigham City and Logan areas. For information and scheduled appointments, please call Brent Duncan, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, at (801) 584-1294 or toll free at (800) 613-4012.

For other eligible veterans please call the Salt Lake City Vet Center at (801) 584-1294/toll free: (800) 613-4012, ext. 1294 or Provo Vet Center at (801) 377-1117/toll free: (800) 246-1197.



## THOUGHTS FROM THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT

*Letter*

This Disabled American Veterans fiscal-year has just ending and it has certainly been one of challenge for the DAV, both on a national as well as Department level. As you know, the national organization took dramatic action in purging out more than 211,000 deceased names from our membership roles. These names will be permanently removed from the membership roles on July 1, 2008. Additionally, the national organization projects a trend that the DAV will lose approximately 2,900 World War II veterans a month in the foreseeable future!

No question that our task is becoming more difficult as time marches on. Membership must be a top priority of our department this year and all years to follow. Our membership chairmen James Randazzo, has committed himself to the task, but he needs our help.

Great accomplishment can be achieved when the task is undertaken with vigor and enthusiasm. As evidence, just look at what the Utah VFW did this year in membership. Through a concerted effort of a team of dedicated individuals, the Utah VFW finished NUMBER ONE in the nation last year in recruitment of new members!

On the financial side, we are holding our own and making progress in many areas. As you know our van program is our most expensive program and the cost of a replacement van is only going to increase in the future. The program has just recently reached the 3 million mile mark and a check at last month national numbers shows our program to be the sixth highest for miles traveled in one month out of 176 van programs national wide.

The Finance Committee is continuously looking at ways to increase income, and many ideas are being considered. Unfortunately, the challenge of effective fund-raising requires resources: personal and working capital. Renting of the hall has been somewhat successful; and the contractual agreement we have with Unity Church has worked out well. Hall rentals do require input from our staff as it is in our best interest to have someone on premise during each rental, as well as requiring us to set up tables, chairs, etc. These tasks are currently being done by the Department Adjutant. Couple these, and other ongoing challenges like the replacement of the roof, with the staggering economy, declining interest rates, and declining membership dues and you can see what we are confronted with.

It has been pointed out that future requirements of day-to-day business communication will one day be only available through computers, meaning that the current system of paper back up reporting will one day be history. Many of our members seem to have difficulty believing this concept will occur. Well guess again!

This trend of electronic transmission is here. Our organization must make the transformation and make it soon. There will be a time, shortly, where the only means of reporting between the local DAV and the National organization will be electronic.

There is a world of useful and interesting information on the site such as chapter standings, individual members information, mailing labels, complete membership listing by name and/or zip, recruitment statistics, process membership applications, payment submission, and magazine subscriptions. One can also check to verify their direct deposit dues deposits in the amount and date of deposit.

Also available from the national organization is the availability of individual web sites space for all chapters and departments in the DAV. This web site space is displayed in an easy to follow format that requires only the typing in of the individual chapter information; there is no complicated programming to do. The department of Utah DAV has a Web Site at [www://utdav.org](http://utdav.org).

If you need assistance with any of the electronic communications available within the organization, please contact the Department Adjutant at 801-359-8168.

Commander Dave Estey comes into office with an enthusiastic and positive attitude punctuated with clearly stated goals, goals with which all of us are obligated to help him achieve. The Adjutant's job is varied at best, however no duty has a higher priority than that of assisting the commander to achieve his goals. Dave has undertaken the task of a complete rearrangement of the Past Commander's display in our hall; no small objective. Working together with Dave, we will hopefully make the State Executive meetings more interesting and informative by encouraging useful committee reports and the dispersing of more communications. Scheduling of interesting guest speakers will be on the agenda as well as activity reports from each chapter.

Commander Dave is committed to his priorities, and working together we can help him achieve those goals and so much more. Remember that this department belongs to our members and its staff is here to assist you.

Sincerely,  
John Maher  
Department Adjutant

**Why isn't my organization mentioned in this newspaper?**  
We accept press releases, stories, articles, letter and photos from all organizations. If you have news, or something to say - Use your Voice and send your items in to the address in the next collum.

## THAT NO VETERAN'S GRAVE SHALL GO UNMARKED

By Fred Mason

On a warm Saturday afternoon, May 10<sup>th</sup> 2008, some fifty people met at the Bingham City Cemetery to dedicate a monument to the 42 veterans buried there. Not something that we have

not done before, but what made this different was not only the beautiful monument but how it came to be and all of the extra work and effort that went into this project.

This all started with a young man looking for a project to qualify for the rank of Eagle Scout. What it turned into was not only completing those hours but a labor of love involving his entire family, boy scouts and a community of volunteers. After about 6000 hours the project is still a work in progress

With the help of Nu-Art Memorial, the Bingham Canyon Lions Club, Jordan School District, American Legion Post 132, Kearns City, and the Salt Lake County United Veterans Council this portion was finally completed.

Not only did Brad Jencks make the monument possible but he also mapped the entire cemetery using GPS technology locating not only the graves of veterans but everyone located there, providing beautiful documentation. A sign has also been placed in the cemetery listing all buried there. Originally it was thought that about 700 individuals were buried there, however



Lynn Beckstead, Dist. 8 Sgt at Arms, Nello Beckstead, Area 2 Commander, Gary Swartz, Dept of Ut Commander, Rex Bass, Dept Sgt at Arms & Dist 8 Chaplan, Fred Mason, Dist 8 Commander & Chairman S.L. Area United Veterans Council, Charles Davis, Member Post 132, Gary Morrill, Adj Post 132, Tom Blockovich, Commander Post 132, Brad Jenks, Eagle Scout.

approximately 1800 have been identified. It certainly is refreshing to see such a dedicated young man giving back to the community. Brad has also contacted the VA for proper head stones for the veteran's graves for those that are either unreadable or damaged. For those of us that have access to the internet all of this documentation can be found on [history.utah.gov/apps/burials/execute/searchburials](http://history.utah.gov/apps/burials/execute/searchburials).

A beautiful program included Brad singing the National Anthem, leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer by Rex Bass, American Legion District Eight Chaplain. The monument was then dedicated by Tom Blockovich, Commander American Legion Post 132, Kearns, Utah. Gary Schwartz, American Legion Department Commander, and Fred Mason, American Legion District Eight Commander and Chairman of the Salt Lake County United Veterans Council, then gave remarks and were followed by a rifle salute and taps by members of Post 132. The program was then opened to anyone in attendance for remarks.

graves of fallen soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery will now become a new mission to Remember - Honor - and Teach the value of freedom in the world today.

In creating Wreaths Across America, it was the wish of Morrill and Karen Worcester to bring children and Veterans together, as the ideal way of expressing appreciation for the past, present, and future sacrifices our Veterans (and their families) make for this country.

Join with us Dec 13, 2008 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Utah celebration of Wreaths Across America, as the Utah Wing Civil Air Patrol carries forth the mission "Remember, Honor, Teach". For More information please contact: 1<sup>st</sup> Lt DeVaughn Simper Utah Wing Civil Air Patrol Community Activity Programs Officer, 801-884-7654, [dsimper@comcast.net](mailto:dsimper@comcast.net).

### USE YOUR VOICE!!!

Send Letters to:  
Editor, *Veterans Voice*  
Utah Department of Veterans Affairs  
PO BOX 58897  
Salt Lake City, UT 84158-0897 or email your suggestions to [berni.davis@va.gov](mailto:berni.davis@va.gov)

### Wreaths Across America

By DeVaughn Simper

*"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free."* Ronald Reagan, 40th United States President (1911 – 2004)

What began in 1992 with a trailer load of wreaths, decorated by volunteers and laid at the

## The Utah Veterans Voice

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## Outdoor Improvement Project at the Veteran's Nursing Home

By Jeff Hason, State Officer

The residents at the Utah State Veterans Nursing Home are enjoying the great outdoors. The patio improvement project that was recently completed is in a beautiful area adjacent to the Red Butte Creek and includes shade structures, a raised garden area, two rabbit hutches / runs, wild bird feeders, bird house and a bird bath.

The resident veterans would like to thank the following individuals and groups that made financial contributions to this project: The William Crist family, the Albert Kehl family, the VFW Post 4918, the DAV Chapter #6 and Robin Morris Woods with the George Q. Morris Foundation.

The resident veterans would also like to thank Eagle Scout Jacob Hannemann and Mason Smith who constructed the raised garden area and the rabbit hutches and runs for their Eagle Scout projects.

*Pictures: Top Left, Bob and Ula Hemingway are being recognized by State Officer Jeff Hanson for the financial contribution made by VFW Post 4918. Left, Stephanie Johnson introduces a Holland lop rabbit that will occupy a hutch and run built by Eagle Scout Mason Smith at the Utah State Veterans' Nursing Home. Right, Members of the DAV Chapter #6 and the VFW Post 4918 are recognized for the contribution made to the outdoor improvement project at the Utah State Veterans' Nursing Home*



## VA/DAV Van Transportation to and from the Salt Lake City VA Medical Center

By John P. Maher, DAV Adjutant

The Department of Veterans Affairs and the Disabled American Veterans organization have entered into a partnership to better serve the veterans in our area. This program is accomplished by the generous donation of time by the volunteer drivers. Local chapters, Departments, of the DAV and the DAV National office purchased the van you are riding on. This van was then donated to the VA Medical Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. We all hope you have a pleasant trip.

The following rules have been established to better utilize the existing vans:

1. At least a 48 hour notice must be given to the Hospital Service Coordinator (HSC) or Area Coordinator (AC) for any veteran requesting priority transportation to the medical center. Your HSC is Heidi Hoper at (801) 582-1585, EXT. 2003. Appointments times must be scheduled between 9 am to 2 pm- Exceptions can only be approved by The HSC.

2. Patients using the VA/DAV Transportation Program are not eligible to collect travel pay from the VA.

3. It is the responsibility of the veteran or his/her representative to contact the HSC as soon as possible regarding cancellations or changes in their appointments.

4. Veterans will be transported to scheduled appointments only. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the HSC. Walk-in patients will ride on a space available basis.

5. Weekend pass patients will be transported home on a space available basis and only if the van is already in town for a scheduled run. No van will be scheduled specifically for a weekend pass.

6. A relay system will be used whenever possible, starting with the furthest van out picking patients up along the route. This will be coordinated with the HSC, either directly or through the AC.

7. Veterans who have been drinking, creating a disturbance, using foul language or being rude or abusive to the volunteer driver, OR, WHILE AT THE SALT LAKE CITY VA MEDICAL CENTER, will be reported and the HSC will document this incidence(s). This documentation will be on

**Sat, Sept 6th GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
**- Glendale Golf Course- Sponsored by**  
**American Legion Post 112 -Tee off 8:00am**  
**- shotgun start - four member team**  
**scramble - \$65.00 per player-**  
**-Sign up by Aug 20th call 262-2254 -**

file both in the HSC office and the Medical Center's Volunteer Office. The HSC and/or the AC will then have the authority to deny transportation to those veterans having disturbance incidence on file.

8. Only personal articles that may be put under the seat or carried on the veterans lap will be carried on the van. Wheelchairs are available and will be provided at the Salt Lake VA Medical Center.

9. The driver is not allowed to lift or attend medically to any patient. Individuals other than the veteran will be permitted to ride in the van with the veteran only after receiving approval from the HSC or the AC.

10. The driver may refuse to transport a veteran he/she feels is too ill to ride the van. Regarding any further trips on the van the driver may request the veteran to provide a written statement from a VA physician stating it is permissible for the veteran to travel on the van. The driver will turn in a copy of this to the HSC.

11. The driver is only permitted to stop the vehicle for rest stops and/or emergencies and to pick up and discharge patients. The driver is prohibited from making side trips to take care of personal business such as grocery shopping or picking up mail. Etc.

12. Drivers and patients are not permitted to smoke, drink alcohol, use foul language or bring weapons, drugs or any illegal substance on the van. Further, the driver may not provide transportation to any veteran who is intoxicated, abusive or poses a threat to the driver or the other passengers. No incarcerated veteran will be transported in this program.

13. Passengers should not engage in any activity that will distract the drivers attention. The driver and passengers will wear seat belts at all times during transport. Any passenger refusing to buckle up will be denied transportation.

14. All trash must be placed in the proper trash receptacle.

15. The telephone on the van is for the use of the driver only, and will not be used by any passengers.

16. The DAV Hospital Service Coordinator will have the daily authority to make any decisions nor clearly covered in these rules subject to a Medical Center review.

17. The van transportation program WILL NOT SCHEDULE ONE WAY TRIPS BACK. If the van comes in with patients, we will take discharges back as space permits, but only if we have scheduled veterans coming in to the Salt Lake City VA Medical Center.



## A VETERAN'S AWARENESS OF ALZHEIMER'S AND BRAIN HEALTH

Submitted: Lee Adams, ALZ Volunteer

It's an old adage: not remembering where you left your keys . . .OK. Putting them in the freezer . . .not OK. As we age, remembering sometimes becomes problematic and we begin to realize the old brain's not firing as it used to. Well, for most of us, not to worry.

We're just slowing down a bit and the neurons in our head are getting a little cloudy, and maybe their connections (synapses) have loosened a bit. That's just the growing old part. Most of us are going to experience some of that. And that's OK. There are others, however, who may need to be a bit more introspective and ask themselves: Just how am I actually doing in the memory department? Am I forgetting more often, is my recall less than it should be? Can I remember what I just read? Do I walk less than well balanced? Have my executive abilities gone AWOL? And where are those dang keys, anyway?

The distinction between simply growing older (a little slower in the thinking, not so steady on the feet) and, not being quite able to plan and complete a task, or not able to recall a cherished name, may be a fine line. For the latter, it can be a sign of mild cognitive impairment (MCI), an early sign of dementia, even Alzheimer's disease (AD). And here is where one's awareness or sensitivity to the signs of possible AD would be most helpful.

Alzheimer's Disease can be debilitating, frightening, embarrassing, even family destructive. It can shorten an otherwise healthy normal life. It is a disease of universal concern. This is not being expressed as a warning, or an alarm, but just to make you aware for we are entering a generational change, specifically the aging of those now known as "baby boomers", fast approaching the crossover age, 60. As is well known, there are a lot of them, you maybe even be one.

Here are some statistics worth noting: there are now more than 30,000 individuals with Alzheimer's or a related dementia in Utah, and that number is expected an increase to double by 2030. Nationally, the current count is a little over 5.2 million, and it is expected that 10 million baby boomers, or 1 out of 8, will develop dementia, and at a younger age than ever before. These numbers, especially the increases, are of grave concern to those professionally involved with the disease (physicians, scientists, researchers, caregivers) for there is no cure, no pill, no magic bullet, that will bring an end to this destructive malady. And while the forecasted numbers are speculation, they are nevertheless based on the historical growth of Alzheimer's and, at this moment, need to be seriously considered.

The Alzheimer's Association, nationally and in Utah, has a vested interest in the disease on three levels: (1) finding a cure, (2) caring for those with AD and their caregivers, until a cure is found, and (3) risk reduction, for those who do not yet have a diagnosis.

Risk reduction (prevention) is the reason for this appeal. For, although we do not yet have a cure, there is much that can be done by each of us, acting individually, to shield ourselves from this disease. While the majority of us will not be victims of AD, by age 65 one in ten likely will. And the number of earlier onsets is rising at an alarming rate and this ratio increases as we grow older. By age 85, unless something changes, one in two will have some form of dementia.

## Golden Grenade Award 2008

The Golden Grenade Award is presented annually by Utah's only Veterans Upward Bound program to individuals who are exemplary in volunteering service to help veterans make their lives more successful. Our program is generously housed at Weber State University. VUB has chosen Mr. Darrell (*Sarge*) Loveland, retired USMC with 30 years of service to our country, as this year's winner.

Darrell has been assisting veterans for over 60 years. Mr. Loveland was also in the Fraternal order of Eagles and Benevolent Order of the Elks for over 40 years. He's also a life member of the VFW and American Legion. For over 60 years he has assisted in performing Military Honors and Flag Etiquette at schools. He's been active in many church and service group activities such as Rotary and Lions club. With over 25,000 hours of community service in Box Elder County a year — for the last 10 years — Mr. Loveland is truly an exemplary of Golden Grenade award winners.



*Darrell Loveland holding his Golden Grenade Award*

The Golden Grenade Award is a way of saying thank you to veterans who work tirelessly to benefit other veterans in the state of Utah. The award was first given in 1989 to J. Dale Madsen who represented what this award is all about. Any issue within Utah state dealing with veterans was spearheaded by J. Dale Madsen.

## Information for Veterans Whose Records May Have Been Lost in 1973 Fire

By Berni Davis, Editor

The National Archives and Records Administration had identified several series of pay records which can be used to reconstruct portions of the Military Personnel File for those that were destroyed in the fire of 1973. This fire destroyed many records, primarily from the Army and Air Force. The Army records that were effected are for persons discharged from November 1912 though January 1960. Air

Force records effected were those discharged from September 1947 through January 1964 with the last name alphabetically after Hubbard. It is important to note that not all the records within the pervious descriptions were lost, 80% from the Army and 75% from the Air Force.

If you were effected by this, the new information can help restore part of the lost record, Veterans should contact the National Personnel Records Center at [vetrecs.archives.gov](http://vetrecs.archives.gov) for more information.

Also US Congressman and Senators can help obtain alternative proof of service if records cannot be found. Contact your representatives if you have questions.

### CAUSES/SOURCES

While a definitive cause for AD has yet to be found, there are several sources of contributing factors: 1, Family history: any individual, who's family has a history of Alzheimer's (be it parent or sibling) is the most likely to be afflicted at some stage in life. Attention to prevention needs to be exercised. 2, Head Injuries: traumatic or severe, are considered to be a possible cause of AD. 3, Life-style: unhealthy habits, a diet high in fat and low in vegetables and fruits, a dedicated couch potato, high stress or lack of sleep, and smoking. 4, Health Issues: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, sleep apnea, and obesity all increase risk. If you have two of these you have twice the risk, three or more the risk jumps more than four times.

### BRAIN FITNESS

In years past it was believed that the brain ceased growth at some early stage in life, and intellectual progress stopped. Not so. We now know that the brain continues to change in its composition (called neuro plasticity) with neurons replacing neurons (billions of them), neurotransmitters carrying their charges through the synapses, all working harmoniously in your head, making you the bright person that you are. Taking this seriously, you need to know that it is important that we exercise the brain to maintain its abilities to function; especially as we grow older and tend to ease off. The Plan:

**EXERCISE.** Among all the prevention modes you can take, physical exercise is probably of greatest benefit to brain fitness. One study found men who walked two or more miles a day had half the dementia as those who walked less than a quarter mile a day. So, take a walk, ideally in the sun for some good

Vitamin D (better a walk than a treadmill, actually), test your balance (walk on the curb or, on a straight line, walk heel to toe) or, take a swim. We know, too, that exercise is of the greatest benefit and near critical to your overall well-being. Not only are you exercising your body, your vascular system, and your sense of balance; you are maintaining your sense of worth, your sense of self. Try to exercise 4days a week; you'll be the beneficiary.

**DIET:** Eat well; avoid fried, trans or even partially hydrogenated fats. Replace those with coconut oil, omega-3s, olive oil, nuts and other good fats. Eat fish (or fish oil) 2 or more times a week. It protects the brain. Be wise in your choice of foods by eating a lot of veggies, fruits, light on steaks and chops, light on pastries and sugar laden desserts, less alcohol, and , well, you know the drill.

**SOCIALIZING:** Be active. Keep up with your friends, attend the theater, join a club, go to church, volunteer in the community. Just don't sit on the couch.

**CHALLENGES:** Experience something new: start a hobby, learn a new game, find learning opportunities that challenge your intellect read, write and practice remembering.

There is much yet to be learned about Alzheimer's. Progress to a cure is well underway, but in the meantime, you need to be sensitive to the gravity of the circumstance of AD, and its causes. Be mindful, too, that the VA has programs to assist the veteran in these circumstances. Much more information is available at [www.alz.org/utah](http://www.alz.org/utah). Also, you can call 801 265-1944 for info on classes, prevention, recent research and how you too can become more involved in the cause.



## Salt Lake Community College Opens First Collegiate Veterans Center in Utah

By Darlene Head

On April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008, Salt Lake Community College opened the first Collegiate Veterans Center located in an institution of Higher Education in the State of Utah and one of few across the nation. The Veterans Office moved from a one-room office to the spacious new location on Redwood Campus, Student Center - room #059. In addition to the full-time and part time college staff, the center also employs six veteran work-study students.

When asked why the college gave this space to the veterans, Eric Weber, Dean of Enrollment Services at SLCC stated, "The College wanted an open and inviting place for our veterans to conduct their benefit business and receive expanded state sponsored services, and a place for them to relax and get away from the busyness. We hope we have done a little to meet those goals with the new Veterans Center."

Each term over 700 veterans attend SLCC. The Veterans Office certifies classes and attendance to the Veterans Administration for 450-500 of those students. All vets attending SLCC are welcome to use the center, which includes a lounge with couches, TV, and microwave and a study area with tables, computers and a printer for their use.

The college has provided the space and furnishings for veterans to use as they complete their education. When asked what he thought of the new center, Air Force veteran and student Shawn Whitney stated, "I am very appreciative of all that has been given here to those of us who are veterans. It is nice to know this college cares about us to give us so much. I have

attended a few other schools and there is nothing like this there."

"This center provides an area for those of us who are veterans to draw strength from one another, since only another veteran understands what a fellow veteran has gone through and continues to go through," says Patrick Dwire, US Army, retired and SLCC student.

The new Veterans Center will centralize services available to veterans attending SLCC including the college Veterans Office and outside Veterans Service agencies which provide support to students. Plans are also in process to begin holding support groups for veterans, spouses and children of veterans, and a variety of workshops.

"It is important to always be looking for ways we can better serve the needs of the veterans attending SLCC. This new center will allow us to be a one-stop support for our students using their GI educational benefits. We send a clear message to our students that they matter and we appreciate their service to our country" says Darlene Head, SLCC Veterans Office Supervisor and Certifying Official. "The college has always been supportive of our veterans and we are grateful for this wonderful new space," Head says.

The current outside veteran agencies working with SLCC veterans are: Veterans Upward Bound (VUB), Dept. Workforce Services, and Bart Davis- State Transition Advisor. Discussion is on going to bring more agencies on campus by Fall 2008 to meet with, assist and support students who are veterans. The English and Computer Science tutor for VUB will now also be located in the Veterans Center beginning August 2008.

Corbin Motter, student and Marine stated after seeing the center, "It makes me feel like my service was worth it and valued by others."

A Grand Opening/open house for the new SLCC Veterans Center will be in August or September.

## Summary of 2008 Utah Boys State

OGDEN- On June 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> Utah Boys State was held at Weber State University. This is an annual event, which is sponsored and presented by the American Legion. This year 199 high school boys participated (will be High School Seniors). A staff of 42 volunteers including 8 law enforcement officers worked to present the program. All participating students were enrolled for three college credits and all successfully completed the required essays and met with an academic representative.

Also, 34 students were also awarded scholarships amounting to a value of \$133,403. Samsung Corp. provided 1, \$1,000 the winner is also eligible for a national \$20,000 scholarship while America First Credit Union provided 2, \$500 scholarships, Weber State Credit Union 1 for \$500. Also, Weber State University offered 9 students \$1020, 14, \$2,000, 7 full four-year tuition (estimated at \$13,389) to be adjusted for tuition increases.

There were several guest speakers including: Honorable Paul Warner – United States Magistrate Judge; Dr. Frank Guiluzza – Weber State University; Honorable Rob Bishop – Congressman of First District Utah; Mr. William Christoffersen – NEC Utah American Legion; Honorable Brad Dee – Utah State Representative; Lt. Col. Randy Watt – Utah Nat. Guard / Assist. Police Chief, Ogden; Falash Hasian Al-Baldawi – Iraqi Interpreter; Honorable Stanton Taylor – Judge of Second District Court; Honorable Mark DeCaria – Weber County Attorney; Mr. Jim McKee – American Legion; Mr. Trent Pedersen – Chief Council FBI; Salt Lake City, Honorable Neal Gunnarson – Assistant Attorney General; Utah, Mr. Wayne Holland – Chair, Utah Democratic Party; Mr. Stan Lockhart – Chair, Utah Republican Part; Mr. Andy Howell – Standard Examiner Managing Editor; Mr. Rod Decker – Media Correspondent; KUTV News, Honorable Gary Herbert – Lt. Governor, State of Utah; Mr. David Barker – Novell, Inc.; Honorable David Sam – U.S. District Court Judge.

Also public service recognition was given for fifteen men: Mr. George Wahlen, Mr. Lamar Buckner, Mr. Paul Bott, Mr. Richard Larsen, Dr. Kurt Rifleman, Coach Chic Hislop, Mr. Javier Chevez, Mr. Rick Rassmussen, Mr. Terry Schow, Falah Hasian Al-Baldwai, Lt. Col. Randy Watt, Detective Chad Reyes, Detective Cary Stricker, Sergeant Kyle Bosgeiter, Sergeant David Creager.

## Matheson Awards Medals to WWII Navy Heroes: Ceremony On July 3<sup>rd</sup> in Memory Grove

SALT LAKE CITY—Congressman Jim Matheson presented a Purple Heart and two Navy and Marine Corps Medals, among other citations, to two Utah World War II Navy veterans the day before the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday. The ceremony will took place at 1:30 p.m. at the World War II Memorial in Memory Grove. The WWII Veterans are Robert "Bob" Strong and George Plant

Matheson's office was instrumental in pushing through the necessary paperwork to ensure delivery of the medals that were earned by Robert "Bob" Strong, 83, of Helper and George Plant, 84, of Murray. They served together in combat, including the historic April 9, 1945 assault on Okinawa.

"These two Utah Navy heroes are among only 23 survivors in the country who served on the USS Chenango- a Navy aircraft carrier that was involved in the Battle of the Pacific, among fights," said Matheson. "It is an honor for me to thank them – belatedly-for their extraordinary service."

## VA Reaching Out to Vets with Mortgage Problems:

### Peake: VA Has a "Solid Record of Success" in Helping

From the VA Office of Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – Many homeowners have found it difficult recently to pay their mortgages, but quick intervention by loan counselors at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has actually reduced the number of veterans defaulting on their home loans.

"VA is reaching out to veterans — both those who use our home-loan guaranty program and those who don't take advantage of our guaranties — to keep people in their homes," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake. "I'm proud of our solid record of success in helping veterans and active-duty personnel deal with financial crises."

Accounting for much of this success are VA counselors at nine regional loan centers who assist people with VA-guaranteed loans avoid foreclosure through counseling and special financing arrangements. The counselors also can assist other veterans with financial problems. VA counselors have helped about 74,000 veterans, active-duty members and survivors keep their homes since 2000, a savings to the government of nearly \$1.5 billion.

Depending on a veteran's circumstances, VA can intercede with the borrower on the veteran's behalf to pursue options — such as repayment plans, forbearance, and loan modifications — that would allow a veteran to keep a home.

To obtain help from a VA financial counselor, veterans can call VA toll-free at 1-877-827-3702. Information about VA's home loan guaranty program can be obtained at [www.homeloans.va.gov](http://www.homeloans.va.gov).

Since 1944, when home-loan guaranties were offered with the original GI Bill, VA has guaranteed more than 18 million home loans worth \$911 billion. Last year, about 135,000 veterans, active-duty service members and survivors received loans valued at nearly \$24 billion.

About 2.3 million home loans still in effect were purchased through VA's home-loan guaranty program, which makes home loans more affordable for veterans, active-duty members and some surviving spouses by protecting lenders from loss if the borrower fails to repay the loan. More than 90 percent of VA-backed home loans were given without a downpayment.

April data shows that foreclosures are down more than 50 percent from the same months in 2003. VA attributes this to prudent credit underwriting standards, its robust supplemental loan servicing program and VA financial loan counselors.

## Are you using all the benefits your entitled to?

### Do you know about all of your benefits?

**Most Veterans may qualify for medical care, home and business loan guarantees insurance, and state and federal job preference. Other Veterans, that incurred illness or injury while on active duty can qualify for Disability compensation, property tax abatement, free entrance to state and national parks, discounts on many products and services.**

**Contact the Utah Department of Veterans Affairs to find out more at 1-800-894-9497.**



## VA Reaches Out to Women Veterans: Department Hosts 4<sup>th</sup> Quadrennial Summit

From VA Office of Public Relations

WASHINGTON – The Fourth National Summit on Women Veterans’ Issues was held at the Westin Washington, D.C., City Center from June 20-22. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake said the summit will help ensure that women veterans know about the benefits and health care they have earned.

“With more women than ever serving in our armed forces, this public forum will bring visibility to the issues important to women veterans of all eras,” Peake said. “Today, women are important contributors to the military and valued members of the veterans community.”

Recognizing the valor, service and sacrifice of America’s 1.7 million women veterans, the VA has created a comprehensive array of benefits and programs.

Women veterans are entitled to the same benefits and medical care as their male counterparts, including health care, disability compensation, education assistance, work-study allowance, vocational rehabilitation, employment and counseling services, insurance, home loan benefits, nursing home care, survivor benefits and various burial benefits.

In addition, VA also has a multitude of services and programs that respond to the unique needs of women veterans, including pap smears, mammography, and general reproductive health care, substance abuse counseling, counseling for sexual trauma, and evaluation and treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Today, over 200,000 women are serving in the armed forces. About 11 percent of the U.S. forces currently serving in Afghanistan and Iraq are women.

According to a recent “hospital report card” by VA, the Department’s screening for breast and cervical cancer for women in VA facilities exceeds screening in private-sector facilities, but women veterans lag behind their male counterparts in some quality measurements.

VA has already launched an aggressive program to ensure women veterans receive the highest quality of care, including \$32.5 million to purchase additional equipment to meet the health care needs of women. This includes full field digital mammography equipment, stereotactic imaging technology, specialized ultrasound and biopsy equipment and DEXA scanners for bone density measurements. The status of health care for women veterans will be a major topic at the summit.

There is a women veterans program manager at every VA medical center, a women’s liaison at every community based outpatient clinic and a women veterans coordinator at every VA regional office.

### Medical Benefits for OEF/OIF Veterans

COMBAT veterans are eligible for free medical care from VA for most conditions for five years after they separate from active duty. VA is reaching out to veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) who have been discharged but have not contacted VA about their benefits. In addition to health care, other possible benefits include home loan guarantees, education, training and life insurance. If you are – or if you know – an OEF–OIF combat veteran who has not contacted VA to learn about these benefits, please contact the VA Medical Center at 1-800-613-4012.

For Veterans of other era’s, non combat Veterans or those outside of the time frame, you may still be eligible for benefits although you may need to submit to the Mean’s test, which bases eligibility on income, among other criteria. Contact the VA Medical Center Enrollment office for details.



*The newly restored Salt Lake City Cemetery, Veterans section. This part of the cemetery had fallen victim to time and poor upkeep, as a result most of the gravemarkers were either broken, missing, sunken or faded. Thanks to the generous donation of Onyx Construction, who donated their time, labor and materials to restore the cemetery, all of the graves are now properly marked. This May, on the traditional Memorial Day, a rededication ceremony was held to properly recognize the efforts of those who worked restore the cemetery as well as to recognize those who are laid to rest.*

## Gulf War Veterans Given Added Voice at VA: New Committee to Air Veterans’ Concerns

Office of Public Affairs

WASHINGTON -- Veterans of the 1990-91 Gulf War will gain additional access to the leadership of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) when the department’s Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans holds its first meeting today. The 14-member, independent panel will advise the Secretary and the department on the full range of health care and benefits needs of those who served in the conflict.

“I will ask them to take a ‘fresh-eyes’ approach in developing their recommendations and work expeditiously to produce a final report within 18-months,” said Secretary Peake.

Serving on the committee are Gulf War and other veterans, veterans service organizations’ representatives, medical experts, and the surviving spouse of a Gulf War veteran. Members were selected to provide a variety of perspectives, experiences, and expertise. Open to the public, the meeting is scheduled for June 17 – 19, 2008 at the Hamilton Crowne Plaza, 14<sup>th</sup> & K Streets, NW, Washington.

Secretary of Veteran Affairs Dr. James B. Peake will welcome the members and thank them for their service both on the committee and in their lives as citizens, veterans or veteran advocates. He will discuss the importance the department places on the unique issues and challenges faced by Gulf War veterans.

The first meeting is designed to give committee members an overview of VA as well as the benefits and services provided to Gulf War veterans. Members will receive briefings on education, home loan guaranty, disability compensation and other benefits. Additional briefings will include health care and veterans’ legal and appeal rights. They will heard public comments June 18 at 2:15 p.m. and June 19 at 3:30 p.m.

The committee members are: Charles Cragin, (Chair) of Raymond, ME who currently serves as a senior counselor for Maine Street Solutions, LLC; Martha Douthit of Ashburn, VA, surviving spouse of

Gulf War Army veteran, member of the Gold Star Wives of America, currently an international trade analyst with the U.S. Department of Commerce; Dr. Henry Falk of Atlanta, GA, retired rear admiral and former Assistant U.S. Surgeon General and current director for the Coordinating Center for Environmental Health and Injury Prevention with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Mark Garner of Lorton, VA, a retired Marine Corps chief warrant officer-three and Gulf War veteran who served as a Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Defense Officer; Dr. Lynn Goldman of Chevy Chase, MD, vice chair of the Institute of Medicine Gulf War and Health Study; currently professor of environmental health sciences at Johns Hopkins University; Dr. John Hart of Plano, TX, past president of the Society for Behavioral and Cognitive Neurology, currently professor of neurology and psychiatry at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center; William (Rusty) Jones of South Riding, VA, retired Marine Corps colonel, and veteran of Gulf War and Vietnam War; Kirt Love of Crawford, TX, Army veteran of the Gulf War, currently serving as director of the Desert Storm Battle Registry; Daniel Ortiz of Whittier, CA, Army veteran of the Gulf War, currently serving as department service director with the Veterans of Foreign Wars; Daniel Pinedo of Oceanside, CA, Marine Corps colonel currently serving as the comptroller for First Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Pendleton, CA; Thomas Plewes of Annandale, VA, a retired Army lieutenant general and former chief of the Army Reserve, also a current senior program officer with National Academy of Sciences; Valerie Randall of Savage, MD, a retired Army sergeant first class; currently with the Department of Homeland Security; Edward (Randy) Reese of Washington, D.C, Army veteran of the Gulf War; current national service director for the Disabled American Veterans; Steve Robertson of Fredericksburg, VA, Gulf War veteran who served both in the Air Force and Army National Guard and is the current director of the national legislative commission for The American Legion.





*A Day of Honor: On June 21<sup>st</sup> at Weber State University, Veterans Services presented A Day of Honor for the Families of Fallen Soldiers. At this event, the bronze bust statues of three of Utah's fallen soldiers, Sgt. Michael R. Lehmiller, Spc. Daniel G. Dolan, and Cpl. Michael A. Pursel were unveiled.*

## VA Names 13 to Rural Health Advisory Committee- Members include Directpr of Salt Lake City VA Medical Center and Executive Director of Utah Department of Veterans Affairs

From the VA Office of Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake has appointed 13 people to a new Veterans Rural Health Advisory Committee, which will advise him on health care issues affecting veterans in rural areas.

“This distinguished panel includes strong advocates for the needs of VA patients in rural areas,” Peake said. “This is an important step in expanding access to VA’s world-class health care system for veterans.”

The 13-member group will examine ways to enhance Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care services for veterans in rural areas by evaluating current programs and identifying barriers to health care.

The committee, chaired by James F. Ahrens, former head of the Montana Hospital Association, includes affected veterans, rural health experts in academia, state and federal professionals who focus on rural health, state-level veterans affairs officials, and leaders of veterans service organizations.

The members of VA’s Veterans Rural Health Advisory Committee are: James F. Ahrens of Cascade, MT, former member of Montana governor’s task force on health care; Dr. Robert Moser of Tribune, KS, physician who practices in rural Kansas and Colorado; Cynthia Barrigan of Centreville, VA, Veteran, now acting executive director of Virginia Telehealth Network; Charles Abramson of Missoula, MT, an Air Force veteran who served on the medical staff ethics committee of St. Patrick Hospital; Maj. Gen. John W. Libby of Sidney, ME, adjutant general of the Maine National Guard; Hilda Heady of Morgantown, WA, Social worker and associate vice president for West Virginia Rural Health Association; Dr. Ronald Franks of Theodore, AL, psychiatrist and vice president of the College of Medicine at the University of South AL; Bruce Behringer of Johnson City, TN, assistant vice president at East Tennessee State University for Rural and Community Health; Rachel Gonzales Hanson of Uvalde, TX, Member of National Association of Community Health Centers; Tom Ricketts, Ph.D., of Chapel Hill, NC, Director of North Carolina Rural Health Research Program; Michael Dobmeier of South Grand Forks, ND, National Judge Advocate of the Disabled American Veterans and president of the North Dakota Veterans Home Foundation; Terry Schow of Ogden, UT, Veteran and Executive Director of the Utah Department of Veterans Affairs; and James Floyd of Salt Lake City, Native American and director of the Salt Lake City VA Medical Center.

## Summit Brings Renewed VA Drive for Women Veterans *Peake: Reinventing to be “Women-Centric”*

WASHINGTON: An aggressive push to ensure women veterans receive the highest quality of care in VA medical facilities was pledged by Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake at the recent National Summit on Women Veterans’ Issues. Although VA has services for women patients equal to those men receive, Peake told the audience of over 400 women-veteran advocates, “We are reinventing ourselves by expanding our women-centric focus to initiate new programs that meet the needs of women veterans.”

Citing the demographic shift that brings increasing numbers of women to VA for care and the need for

changes, Peake announced formation of a work group to focus on women’s needs in prosthetics and rehabilitation, hiring women’s advocates in VA medical centers, developing quality measurements specifically for women patients, purchasing more state-of-the-art, women’s health care equipment, and expanding education in women’s health for VA care providers.

Summit attendees also learned that VA recently established a work group whose goal is to ensure every female veteran enrolled in VA care has a women’s health primary care provider to meet gender-specific needs.

The June 20-22 conference in Washington focused on how to ensure VA meets women-specific health needs and how to inform more women veterans of their VA benefits. It was the fourth women’s summit, which VA holds every four years.

## NORTHERN UTAH VETERANS NURSING HOME MOVES FORWARD

By Dennis McFall, Project Manager

Plans to construct a 120 bed Veterans’ Skilled Nursing Facility in northern Utah are moving ahead. The Utah State Legislature, this past session, approved the construction of this much needed facility, using all state dollars on the front end, and will recover 65% of the construction cost when an already approved grant is funded at the federal level.

All environmental surveys are complete, along with water, soil and related tests required. The VA has agreed to accept a Design/Build approach, which will accelerate the completion of this project by several months. Program requirements are near completion and the next stage of developing a building design will soon begin. This facility will provide approximately 120 new full time jobs in the Ogden/Weber area and will satisfy, to some degree, a need for long term care for veterans that has grown significantly in the past few years. The Salt Lake City facility has continually had a waiting list for admission that exceeds 100 persons. Many who inquire do not bother to add their name to the list because of the anticipated wait for an available bed.

Veterans, who reside in a state owned facility such as this, will have nearly one-half the cost of their care paid for by the VA. The State Home Per Diem system will also pay for 100% of the cost of nursing home care for those veterans who have a disability rating of 70% or higher.

Terry Schow, Executive Director of the Utah Department of Veterans Affairs, has appointed a 15 member Advisory Committee to work with the department and make recommendations to maximize effectiveness of the facility and enhance the service offerings. Dennis McFall, Deputy Director of the Department will function as the Project Director and will coordinate budget and grant requirements as well as all other activities with the US Department of Veterans Affairs and other state, local and federal agencies that will be associated with the facility.

Target date for completion of the nursing home is November 2009, which is realistic if there are no delays in obtaining construction materials and assuming the labor market remains viable.

For further details regarding the facility, or placing a veteran please contact the Utah Department of Veterans Affairs at 801-326-2372.



## Matheson Bill Takes Action on High Gas Prices: Cracks Down on Oil Speculators

Submitted by: Alyson Heyrend

Washington D.C.—Congressman Jim Matheson took action to address high gas prices, introducing legislation giving a federal agency authority to detect, prevent and punish price manipulators and speculators who trade U.S. crude oil on foreign commodity exchanges. Matheson and fellow Blue Dog Energy Task Force Co-chair Rep. Charlie Melancon of Louisiana jointly introduced the measure.

“One factor contributing to the record high price at the pump is what’s going on with Wall Street energy commodity traders,” said Matheson. “With this bill, excessive manipulation and unscrupulous speculation can potentially be detected and halted before more economic harm is done to consumers and businesses.”

Matheson said U.S. crude oil, gasoline and home heating oil futures contracts are traded primarily on exchanges in New York and London. Under current law, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) only has authority to prevent price manipulation and excessive speculation resulting from energy trades from within the U.S. Matheson says his bill would ensure the CFTC has full enforcement authority over traders within the United States who trade on a foreign exchange.

“At \$135-a-barrel oil, it’s clear that there’s more going on than just the normal law of supply and

demand. Commodities traders who are routing their trades through a foreign exchange are ‘gaming the system’ and all of us filling up at the pump are losing out,” said Matheson. “I’ll push hard to enact this bill and speed relief to consumers.”

The Close the London Loophole Act would strengthen CFTC oversight by providing the CFTC with clear legal authority, as well as the legal obligation to obtain trading data from foreign exchanges operating in the U.S. through direct trading terminals. Matheson’s bill has a companion version in the Senate.



Jeff Tiede, left, of the Salt Lake Chamber Military Affairs Interum Chair and President of American Packaging, presented Representative Greg Hughes, right, with a certificate of apperciation, a Patriot Award, for his efforts and support of Veterans as a member of the Utah State Legislature. This was presented at the Veterans Memorial Day Cermony held at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery this May.

## Senator McCain To Address The Delegates at the 87th National Convention

Republican presidential candidate Senator John McCain (R-AZ) is tentatively scheduled to address the delegates at DAV’s 87th National Convention in Las Vegas on Saturday, Aug. 9. Senator Barack Obama, the Democratic presidential candidate, also has been invited to address convention delegates. The DAVs 87th National Convention is being held at Ballys Hotel Las Vegas Aug. 9-12.

## State Transition Assistance Advisory, Bart O. Davis received Veterans Small Business Champion of the Year Award from the Small Business Administration

Bart is a retired colonel from the Army National Guard, and has spent his time helping soldiers and Veterans understand the benefits they have earned. Bart is a member of the Advisory Board of the Utah Small Business Development Center where he continually advocates for new opportunities for Veterans in the local business community. Additionally, he is active in government procurement assistance efforts for disabled Veterans and all small business owners.

| Table of Post 9/11 GI Bill Payments                                |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Members Minnum Service:  | % of Maximum Benefit Payable |
| 36 months  | 100                          |
| 30 continuous days and discharged for service connected disability | 100                          |
| 30 months, but less than 36  | 90                           |
| 24 months, but less than 30  | 80                           |
| 18 months, but less than 24  | 70                           |
| 12 months, but less than 18  | 60                           |
| 06 months, but less than 12  | 50                           |

### Continued from page 1: Post 9/11

Bill, chapter 30, 1606 or 1607 and have met the requirements for the Post 9/11 GI Bill may elect to receive the benefits under that program, which has the same 36 months of benefits as the other programs.

Those who elect to receive this benefit will receive a percentage (based on service, see table) of the following: amount of tuition and fees, not to exceed the most expensive in-state tuition for a state school that is paid to the school; monthly housing allowance equal to the basic allowance for housing (BAH) amount payable to military E5 with dependents in the same zip code as the school; a yearly book and supplies stipend of up to \$1000; and a one time \$500 payment, available only to certain individuals relocating from highly rural areas.

Another major change from pervious benefits is that the eligibility period for this GI Bill is 15 years from the last period of active duty of at least 90 consecutive days, unless released for a service connected disability. Also, the Department of Defense may offer the opportunity for the transfer of these benefits to dependents, spouses or children. Contact the DoD for more information.

Veterans may receive these benefits for training programs approved for Chapter 30 that are offered by an approved institution of higher learning including vocation or technical training, graduate and undergraduate degrees and some tutorial assistance, licensing and certification tests. Also, those who were eligible for Ch 30, 1606 or 1607 may use the Post 9/11 GI Bill for on the job training, apprenticeships, correspondence courses, flight training and preparatory course.

For more information, or to apply for this benefit, contact the Department of Veterans Affairs, or log on to [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).

#### Examples:

Tuition and Fees charged for full time: \$6700

Highest In-State Tuition and Fees: \$7000

**Example 1:** Three years on active duty, and a full-time student, in the above example would be eligible for \$6700 for tuition and fees, the monthly housing allowance, and \$1000 for books and supplies.

**Example 2:** An aggregated 12 months of active duty in the guard or reserves, and a full-time student would be eligible for \$4020 (60% of 6700) for tuition and fees, \$600 (60% of \$1000) for books and supplies stipend and 60% of the monthly housing allowance.

## Marine Corps League Reaching Out to Marine families Throughout the State of Utah

By Joe Surace

It has come to the attention of the Department of Utah, Marine Corps League, that many Marine Families have a desire to connect with the Corps in a more direct way by supporting Marines over seas, and in the state. The League can and will help with that connection by bringing the families together by way of our Auxiliary Units.

The Utah Marine Corps League Auxiliary has been sending care boxes of comfort items to Marine units in Iraq and Afghanistan. At the present time, one of the Auxiliary’s goal is to crochet of knit camouflage scarves for Fox Company, which is scheduled to deploy some time next year. The goal is 150 scarves by January 2009. Ladies from the Mt. Olympus Senior Center, George E Wahlen VA Medical Center, friends and family have joined the Auxiliary in this endeavor. They are proud to say they have almost reached the half way point.

The Auxiliary is looking for unit addresses of Utah Marines that are on active duty, especially those deployed in foreign countries.

Any member of a Marine Family desiring to affiliate with our League or Auxiliary, are cordially invited to join us at our gatherings and to enjoy the comradeship of our Marine family groups- marine Families are for life.

For additional information, please contact the Department Commander, Joseph P. C. Surace at (801) 281-6101 or email [pimarine\\_56@sisna.com](mailto:pimarine_56@sisna.com).



## Flag Day Celebration at the George E. Wahlen Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center

In recognition of Flag Day 2008, the Knights of Columbus posted all of the State flags at the front of the medical center (photo, right). Following the ceremony, Knights, VA volunteers, and staff visited with patients and distributed 4" x 6" flags to each of them (photo far right). Knights volunteer in a variety of charitable enterprises to serve the people and programs of their communities. Volunteerism informed by Christian concern is the hallmark of the Knights of Columbus. It results in outstanding contributions of time and talent to the Catholic Church, our communities, families, young people and brother knights.



## Secretary Reinforces VA's Commitment to Research Safety and Veteran Focus: Research Has Set National Safety Standards, Benefits All Americans

From VA Office of Public Relations

WASHINGTON – In a congressional hearing Secretary of Veterans Affairs James B. Peake, M.D., discussed the safety and importance of the research programs operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as well as an absolute commitment to its patients, while expressing regret that even a single veteran would feel improperly treated or misused.

"VA has an outstanding research program, and has been innovative in its protection of human research subjects," Peake said before the House Committee on Veterans Affairs. "I am determined that VA will remain a leader in the protection of human research subjects and in veteran-centric research."

Peake pointed out VA researchers have played key roles in the development of breakthrough medical advancement such as the cardiac pacemaker, the CT scanner and improvements to artificial limbs. The first liver transplant was performed by a VA researcher. The Department's researchers have also conducted important trials on medication for tuberculosis, schizophrenia, high blood pressure, shingles and many other diseases that affect not only veterans but all Americans.

The VA secretary's remarks came in the wake of published reports in the *Washington Times* about a VA research program on smoking cessation involving veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Peake emphasized the research project was not a drug study, but an examination of the most effective site of care to treat heavy smokers who have PTSD, using medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

"Veterans with PTSD are more likely to be heavy smokers and are only half as likely to quit as are smokers without PTSD in the general population and smoking kills," Peake.

None of the medications used in this study are investigational or experimental, all are FDA

approved, and the drug that made headlines, Chantix, is in fact considered to be the most effective medication available for smoking cessation with six million prescriptions written.

Peake noted any veterans receiving Chantix in the study or anywhere in the VA had been put on the drug by their doctors as an individual doctor-patient decision, with continued monitoring the health status. As information within the VA and by the FDA suggested potential psychological side effects were being seen in some patients taking Chantix, Clinical providers were notified promptly. Not only were letters sent by researchers to members of the study, but, additionally, a letter has been sent to every veteran prescribed Chantix by the VA discussing possible side-effects, encouraging them to contact their provider immediately if they experience side effects and assuring them that the VA will help them find another way to quit smoking if they are concerned about Chantix.

More than 60 FDA approved drugs could have adverse effects that may include "suicidal ideation and suicidal behavior," Peake said. "If VA were to withhold these medications from our patients with mental health issues, we would have great difficulty treating them. Weighing the risk, all drugs have risks, against the benefit with the best information available is what the doctor and patient do as a drug is prescribed."

The Secretary also addressed allegations implying VA research is somehow compromised by outside entities such as drug companies and universities calling it ridiculous. The smoking cessation study was solely funded by the VA, with no outside funding. VA research is approved by VA's Office of Research and Development and does not require approval from the Secretary, including this smoking cessation study. The scientific review and human subjects protection processes ensure that VA research addresses specifically and only the purpose of the study.



Peake has also directed four internal investigations: A comprehensive review of the smoking cessation study within 30 days; A review of all PTSD drug protocols in the VA system within 45 days; A full review of our adverse event reporting system for pharmaceuticals within 20 days; A review of VA's medication notification system to ensure the system's policies support timely communications to our patients and providers within 20 days.

Peake said his intent is to ensure the best, the most ethical, and the safest scientific inquiries into the health care needs of our nation's veterans.

### Why Register with the Utah Department of Veterans Affairs?

Currently, the Utah Department of Veteran Affairs does not have a complete list of Veterans currently residing in Utah. We are attempting to build this all-inclusive database in order to accurately show how many Veterans Utah has, what demographics they make up and what services they are utilizing. This information is used to show why we need more funding and better benefits for Utah's Veterans. In addition to this, we also use the information provided to determine if there are benefits available to individual Veterans that they are not receiving or new benefits they may be entitled to. Also, on request, we will keep Veterans updated on benefits and events that may be of interest to them. Log on to [veterans.utah.gov](http://veterans.utah.gov) and register with us today!!



## New Officers for Veterans Service Organizations

Summer Marks the Annual Passing of the Hat for the Officers of the Veterans Service Organizations following is a list of the new officers for the three largest Veterans organizations in the State. The Commanders of these three organizations hold a spot on the Veterans Advisory Council to the Governor.

The Disabled American Veterans annual department convention was held in Wendover, Nevada the first weekend of June 2008 and the following officers were elected: Commander, Dave Estey, Sr. Vice Commander James Randazzo, 1st Vice Commander, JC Wicks, 2nd Vice Commander, Greg Davis. New Auxiliary officers are: Commander, Pat Brunsvik, Sr. Vice Commander, Helene Pockrus, 1st Vice Commander Shirleen Bees and 2nd Vice Commander Kelly Ficarra.

Here is a list of the top 4 newly elected officers (08-09) for the VFW: Commander Mike Baker Post # 1481, Sr. Vice Commander Brent Neilsen Post # 10900, Jr. Vice Commander Dennis Howland Post # 1481, Dept. Quarter Master Lowell Tripp Post # 3586, Dept. Adjutant Don B Myers Post # 8307.

The American Legion's new State Commander is Lee Engelbrecht with Fred Mason as the Vice Commander.

In addition to the three largest service organization, Frank Maughan is the commander for the Military Order of the Purple Heart and Joe Surace is the Commander for the Marine Corps League.

## VA Announces 55 Per Diem Awards for Homeless Assistance

From VA Office of Public Relations

Homeless veterans and those who help them received a significant boost in their efforts when the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) made 55 new awards to public and private nonprofit organizations that assist homeless veterans.

"It's important that VA continue to help our nation's homeless veterans, many of whom are still dealing with the effects of past conflicts," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake. "These awards provide needed resources to hard working, caring and compassionate people who provide one-on-one care and services to our veterans every day in their own communities."

Today's announcement of awards to 55 community-based organizations in 24 states will add over 1,000 transitional housing beds to the 9,400 beds already available for homeless veterans because of VA grants for the homeless.

VA has the largest integrated network of homeless assistance programs in the country. It is the only federal agency that provides substantial one-on-one contact with the homeless. In many cities and rural areas, VA social workers and other clinicians conduct extensive outreach programs, clinical assessments, medical treatment, alcohol and drug abuse counseling and employment assistance.

Last year, VA committed more resources than at any time in its history for programs benefiting homeless veterans. The Department committed \$26 million in new funding to support about 2,000 new transitional housing beds, \$12 million for veterans who are seriously mentally ill, terminally ill, frail

## THE WALL THAT HEALS COMES TO OGDEN AS APART OF THE OLD GLORIOUS CELEBRATION

By Dennis Howland

*Peace is very important in remembering – after all these men and women didn't become a name on The Wall through an act of peace.*

The Wall That Heals, a half-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., brought the message of The Wall home to Ogden from June 12 to 15. The program was a part of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 1481's annual Old Glorious program in partnership with Ogden's Newgate Mall.

Reports Program Chair Dennis Howland said, "Old Glorious focuses on rededication, renewal and reaffirmation of our loyalty and allegiance to the American Flag 'Old Glory.' It is designed to provide an atmosphere of Americanism and patriotism throughout the community through our love of this



The Wall That Heals escorted by motorcycles as it made its way to the Ogden Newgate Mall

great banner of freedom.

Located at the Newgate Mall, 36<sup>th</sup> street and Wall Avenue, the exhibition featured the dramatic replica – stretching nearly 250 feet in total length – as well as an Information Center and traveling museum displaying memorabilia left at The Wall in Washington, D.C. Activities planned included several hundred motorcycles escorting the truck carrying The Wall through Weber Canyon, assembly of the Wall, the Riverdale City Band, posting of Colors by VFW Post 1481, a stampede, the Box Elder Symphonic Choir, and the Army Rock Band.

### WANTED: VOLUNTEERS

**Volunteer support is the cornerstone of several organizations. Many of the services offered to Veterans would not be available without the support of volunteers. The following organization need you help!**

- **The George E Wahlen VA Medical Center contact 584-1241**
- **FT Douglas Museum, call 581-1251**
- **Honor Guards and additional opportunities call 1-800-894-9497**

elderly and women, to include women with children, and \$2 million for other programs.

VA has provided more than \$350 million in grants and per diem payments since it initiated the Grant and Per Diem Program in 1994.

Since 1988, VA has partnered with hundreds of communities to support more than 1,500 "Stand Downs" across the nation. Stand Downs give homeless veterans a temporary refuge where they can obtain food, shelter, clothing and a range of community and VA assistance. For more information see <http://www.va.gov/homeless/>.

VA operates the nation's largest integrated health care system, with 153 hospitals, more than 800 clinics, 135 nursing homes and 47 domiciliaries, treating about 1 million patients each week.

For more information, visit the VA website at [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) or contact VA's Homeless Veterans Programs Office at (202) 461-7401, or e-mail VA at [homelessvets@mail.va.gov](mailto:homelessvets@mail.va.gov).

## New Tax Filing Requirements for Tax Exempt Organizations

IRS Electronic Postcard (Form 990-N): Beginning this year, all small tax exempt organizations, including Veterans Service Organization Chapters, who previously were not required to file a tax return (Form 990) will be required to file the new E-Postcard 990 with the IRS. This NEW filing requirement applies to tax year 2007 and is due no later than November 15, 2008 covering DAV tax period July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

Small Chapters whose gross receipts were normally \$25,000 or less were not required to file Form 990 or Form 990-EZ. However, this new law requires all Chapters, regardless of income, to file 990-N (E-Postcard). A call to the IRS explaining that some of our chapters do not have a computer was answered with "computers are available at local libraries and, therefore, no exceptions to the electronic filing of the 990-N (Postcard) would be allowed.

There is a simple, web based process for filing this E-Postcard, however, a chapter must have e-mail address, or at least the person using the computer can use his e-mail address, in order to complete the filing process. Full Instructions and detailed information on this E-Postcard is available online at [www.irs.gov/eo](http://www.irs.gov/eo). Also, you can print the instructions and forms from this IRS Website.

**This summer the Utah Department of Veterans Affairs will be a several County fairs including Weber, Davis, Utah and Salt Lake as well as the Utah State Fair. Look for us to get information on benefits as well as to enter our prize drawing!**



The Disabled American Veterans sponsors a van that runs throughout the region transporting Veterans to their appointments at the George Wahlen VA Medical Center and then back home. To schedule an appointment with the van call 1-800-613-4012 EXT: 2003

VAN TIMES AND LOCATIONS

NORTHERN ROUTE

- 02:15 AM—SAGE JUNCTION (EXIT 33 OFF FREEWAY 1-15)
- 02:45 AM—ASHTON (DAVE’S JUBILEE GROCERY STORE)
- 03:15 AM—ST. ANTHONY (MAVERICK STATION) (S. BRIDGE ST. AND 3<sup>RD</sup> S.)
- 03:45 AM--REXBURG (MAVERICK STATION) (MAIN ST. AND SECOND WEST)
- 04:15 AM—RIGBY (MAVERICK STATION MAIN AND CLARK ST.)
- 04:45 AM—IDAHO FALLS (CHEVRON and McDONALDS) (BROADWAY AND SATURN)
- 05:15 AM—BLACKFOOT (FLYING J) (228 PARKWAY DR)
- 05:30 AM-FORT HALL (GAS STATION BY CASINO)

SOUTHERN ROUTE

- 05:45 AM—POCATELLO (VET CENTER 1800 GARRET WAY) (WESTWOOD VILLAGE MALL)
- 06:15 AM—McCAMMON (FLYING.J) (BY FREEWAY 1-15)
- 06:30 AM-DOWNEY (FLAGS WEST TRUCK STOP) (OFF FREEWAY 1-15)
- 06:45 AM—MALAD (CHEVRON STATION) (EXIT 13 OFF FREEWAY 1-15)
- 07:15 AM—TREMONTON (SINCLAIR STATION) (EXIT 40 OFF HIGHWAY 84)
- 07:35 AM—BRIGHAM CITY (FLYING J EXIT 362 OFF 1-15)

*ARRIVAL AT VA HOSPITAL IS BETWEEN 08:30 TO 09:00 APPOINTMENTS MUST BE BETWEEN 09:00 TO 14:00*

*THE VAN DEPARTS HOSPITAL WHEN THE LAST VETERAN IS DONE*

**2008 VAN SCHEDULE FOR  
IDAHO, PRICE and  
ST. GEORGE**

FOR APPOINTMENTS CALL:  
IDAHO: (208) 221-0362  
PRICE, ST. GEORGE : 1-800-613-4012  
x. 2003

- JULY 1, 3, 7, 9, 11, 15,  
17, 21, 23, 25, 29, 31
- AUGUST 4, 6, 8, 12, 14,  
18, 20, 22, 26, 28
- SEPTEMBER 3, 5, 9, 11,  
15, 17, 19, 23, 25, 29
- OCTOBER 1, 3, 7, 9, 13, 15,  
17, 21, 23, 27, 29, 31
- NOVEMBER 4, 6, 10,14,  
18, 20, 24, 26, 28
- DECEMBER 2, 4, 8, 10, 12,  
16, 18, 22, 24, 26, 30

**2008 VAN SCHEDULE FOR  
LOGAN, VERNAL, ELKO,  
ELY, AFTON, ROCK SPRINGS**

FOR APPOINTMENTS CALL:  
LOGAN AND VERNAL: 1-800-613-4012  
x2003

- JULY 2, 8, 10, 14, 16, 18,  
22, 24, 28, 30
- AUGUST 1, 5, 7, 11, 13,  
15, 19, 21, 25, 27, 29
- SEPTEMBER 2, 4, 8, 10,  
12, 16, 18, 22, 24, 26, 30
- OCTOBER 2, 6, 10, 14,  
16, 20, 22, 24, , 28, 30
- NOVEMBER 3, 5, 7, 13,  
17, 19, 21, 25
- DECEMBER 1, 3, 5, 9, 11, 15, 17,  
19, 23, 29, 31